

Canadian Centre
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Development



Centre canadien
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de la politique étrangère

ANGOLA ROUNDTABLE REPORT
Alternatives
Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development

November 26, 1999
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario

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REPORT FROM THE ROUNDTABLE ON ANGOLA

November 26, 1999

Ottawa

On November 26, 1999, Alternatives and the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development organised a one day roundtable on Angola. The roundtable brought together NGOs, experts, academics, as well as government officials. It benefited from presentations by the Hon. Maria Minna, Minister for the Canadian International Development Agency, Robert Fowler, Canadian Ambassador to the UN and Allan Cain, Honorary Consul in Luanda. Four guests from the Angolan NGO community were also present. The purpose of the discussion was to assess Angola's current situation, examine peace-building opportunities, identify strategies for Canada and Canadian NGOs to help bring about peace, and to think about the future of Angola.

1. Summary of Key Themes

- i. The perennial question surrounding the causal link between security (peace) and development came into focus many occasions during the discussion. While some argued no development can take place amid armed hostilities, others pointed out that peace can not "break out" without considerable peace-building/capacity building initiatives, especially in the area of education. The security/development dilemma influences issues including disarmament, the role of Angolan civil society and priorities for governments.
- ii. Most participants acknowledged the important role civil society has in bringing about peace and democracy. In Angola, women and churches are especially well positioned to initiate change at the community level and press for peace at the government level. Spaces have been opening in the recent past for state-society dialogue as well as increased NGO engagement.
- iii. The international dimension of the Angolan civil war was stressed. Diamonds and other natural resources are sold primarily to the North. Meanwhile, weapons are made and sold to Angola from abroad. We should not underestimate the role of the rest of the world in the longevity and intensity of the Angolan civil war.
- iv. While sanctions are, in some instances, effective as a tool of influence, the

excessive disruption of fragile commodity markets (especially diamonds) may lead to the collapse of commodity-dependent African economies.

2. Internal Context and Factors Contributing to the Civil War

Since its independence from Portugal, in 1975, Angola has been enveloped in a civil war with serious and wide-reaching implications. The long-standing conflict between the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) has paralysed the country's development and caused a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented proportions. Peace has been thwarted twice this decade as UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi refuses to accept the electoral victory and leadership of the MPLA. (The first peace accord between UNITA and MPLA was signed in 1991 at Bicesse, Portugal. The second agreement was reached in Lusaka in late 1994). The rich resources Angola possesses in oil and diamonds have supported and sustained the war. The international community, including the United Nations, is seen to have failed in effectively facilitating and supporting the peace process in Angola.

Power in Angola has been systematically monopolised since the colonial era. The majority of Angolans have been marginalised politically, socially and economically for decades. As a result of these processes, there was no chance to build a national Angolan identity, civic culture or to develop a sense of common good. The colonial era has also left Angola with deep regional divisions based on religious lines. The "Western" political solution to reconciliation has been based on majoritarian models that do not work in the Angolan context. The bipolar conflict can only be resolved by consensus. Some participants blamed the passive Angolan civil society for its inability to mobilise for change in support of the peace process and pointed to examples showing that activism works. (When mothers in Angola expressed their resolve not to let their children take up arms and fight, the government was forced to alter recruitment practices.)

Another factor sustaining the war in Angola is the lack of understanding of Angolan history. No systematic evaluation of the colonial as well as post-colonial past has been done. Lessons have not been learnt. Neither societal de-politicization and marginalization nor the expropriation of natural resources have been addressed.

A major dilemma emerged during the roundtable: the causal link between security (i.e., peace) and development. Some argued that as long as the war and bearing arms remain the most viable means to basic human survival including, nourishment, shelter and sense of security, soldiers will not disarm. Therefore, conditions/incentives must be created for soldiers to perceive they have other alternatives. Others pointed out that no such conditions/incentives can be created while armed hostilities continue and argued that peace must come before development.

3. The Role of the Angolan Civil Society in Peace

The war affects all Angolans. The large numbers of displaced people, refugees, abandoned children and victims of land mines continue to undermine the cohesion of Angolan society. While the war is waged almost exclusively by men, women are among those affected the most. Women are subject not only to interpersonal violence in their homes but also state-sanctioned economic violence whereby the resources necessary for their own and their children's survival are siphoned off to buy weapons and wage war.

While women are in many instances victims of a male dominated war, they can play a key role in the search for peace. The survival strategies they had to devise during the war as well as the roles they have taken up empower them in many ways. Women had the opportunity to learn certain skills, including management of household as well as marketing and business skills. Despite a law prohibiting vendors, women are compelled to manoeuvre within the confounds of the local informal economies, exchanging basic products and currencies. Therefore, women may be better prepared than men to become entrepreneurs and start new businesses. Their role as caretakers and household managers increases their stake in peace.

Individually women can spread the culture of peace within their own families. Women should be included in decision making processes so that their voice can be heard and their concerns addressed. Women have already begun to organise in the past 5 years. Women's organisations in Angola work with communities and vulnerable women's groups. They not only support women but aim to empower them by raising awareness about human rights, civic education and the law. By breaking the silence around violence, opposing the war and its supporting ideologies, advocating for policies that support women's survival strategies and by looking towards a peaceful future, women can make a difference in Angola.

Churches are another force. Church initiatives are taking place all over the country, including UNITA-controlled territories. Networking with other NGOs and groups they provide social services, disseminate information and spread the culture of peace throughout the devastated Angolan territory.

While there has been an increase in activities by the Angolan NGOs and Churches as well as mobilisation for peace in the recent past, no viable third party has developed to counter the bipolarity of the conflict. There seems to be, however, a growing space for dialogue between the MPLA government and NGOs. The government appears to have made steps in improving state-society relations. Meanwhile, the elections have confirmed that the civil society in general is in favour of peace. Large numbers of people registered and participated in the 1992 elections including those living on territories held by UNITA. Hostilities on the individual level are minimal. The war does not have grassroots support. Therefore, initiatives aimed at building civic culture in Angola and making Angolans responsible citizens active in the affairs of their state should be developed to achieve peace. These initiatives should also include government officials. Here the dilemma of the causal link between security/peace and development comes to focus

once again. Some argued that civic society can hardly flourish under the conditions of war. No matter what kind of political solution is found, no matter how many referendums for peace are organised, no matter how many peace-building programmes are initiated, there will be no sustainable resolution as long as the war goes on. Nevertheless, one should not underestimate the role of civil society in change.

An argument was made that the role of civil society is not only to mobilise for peace in partnership with the government: Angolan society should be also seen as a force to challenge the corrupt, inefficient and often exclusive Angolan government. There is a danger that preoccupations about reconciliation underestimate the role civil society could play in achieving social equity and justice. These considerations are particularly pertinent since the Angolan government is willing to play the "global game" with all its well documented social costs. This line of reasoning brought to focus the dilemma of what comes first: an active and mobilised civil society or a responsible "facilitating" government? Some participants argued that in the light of the minimal civil society engagement in the peace process the chance of it becoming a critical mass is dubious.

4. Strategies for Peace

Some argued that the only way to peace is the disarmament of both militaries. However, UN-led disarmament before an agreement between the warring factions is reached may actually enhance insecurity of people who are used to live in constant fear of death. Non-transparent disarmament could actually spark hostilities rather than abate them. Buy-back schemes rarely work. In some cases, such as Burundi, a pay-back scheme actually facilitated a weapons up-grade whereby the old weapons were sold to the West and the revenue was used to buy newer models. Disarmament is impossible without national recognition that war is no longer viable.

Sanctions are another tool of influence. However, while sanctions against UNITA only have been imposed by the UN (on arms, travel and representation, petroleum supply, financial flows, and diamonds) they have been poorly implemented or not implemented at all. Caution should be exercised in imposing sanctions and disrupting trade since many African economies depend on the export of raw materials. Diamonds especially represent an extremely fragile market. Balance has to be found between preventing the flow of profits from the sale of diamonds to finance wars and destroying the diamond-dependent African economies.

Control and transparency of the diamond industry (i.e., licencing, regulation, enforcement mechanism) could be a part of the solution to prevent the siphoning of illegal diamond revenues to finance the war machine. Nevertheless, legal and illegal sale of natural resources has a significant role in sustaining the war. We should not underestimate the merit of sanctions and the fact that the diamond buyers in the West are friends of peace only if they are pressured by conscious consumers, NGOs and governments.

Some argued that while the Angolan civil war has an undoubtedly international character, regional actors, especially South Africa could play an important role in achieving a sustainable solution.

The role of peace-building and capacity-building was addressed. Some argued that there should be peace-building and capacity-building activities even amid continuing hostilities. Initiatives aimed at longer term development would lead to creating viable alternatives for soldiers. An environment conducive to economic growth and social development would raise the costs of continuing a devastating war. Awareness and education could lead to the creation of civil society as well as accountable, representative and responsive government. People could learn how to negotiate. The cycle of violence could be broken and a culture of peace take root. Others pointed out that the government has completely withdrawn from any efforts at re-building the devastated infrastructure, environment and society. It is difficult to build peace in such circumstances. Therefore, attention should be paid to short term goals including, humanitarian assistance and continuation and enforcement of sanctions.

5. Canada's Role in Angola

Canada's interest and involvement in Angola is longstanding, dating back to the 1930's. CIDA was very active in Angola in the 1980's, supporting its growing civil society by funding the umbrella group "Program Angola." In 1992, Canadian observers were sent to the UN-monitored elections and since then the situation in Angola has been closely followed (especially the Lusaka Peace Accord and the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol). Canada's development assistance has also continued through international development agencies such as the World Food Program, assistance to NGOs active in Angola, and through CIDA's bilateral program called Canadian Fund. Canada's Honorary Consul, Allan Cain, has been very active in Luanda for almost twenty years, providing consular services to Canadians, assisting the Canadian Embassy in Harare, and running countless development workshops through the NGO - "Development Workshop."

Canada remains committed to ensuring that basic human rights are maintained and Canada supports the work of the human rights unit of the UN office in Angola. Other concerns include land mines. Reports continue pointing to use of land mines by both sides, despite the fact that the Angolan government signed the Ottawa Convention to Ban Land Mines. There is hope that the Angolan government will soon ratify the treaty and stop the production and use of land mines.

Recently, government activities have focussed on the UN Security Council and the Angola Sanctions Committee that Canada chairs. The objective at the Council is to help to reestablish conditions for a resumption of negotiations toward a political settlement. Sanctions are intended to encourage UNITA to return to the political process and participate in the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol.

Angola's attitude towards the UN is ambivalent at present. Sanctions against UNITA have only sparingly been implemented and enforced. Nevertheless, The Sanctions Committee has worked hard to revitalise the sanctions regime in general. Significant progress has been made on restricting the export of Angolan diamonds. Other than sanctions, the UN has also lost its credibility in Angola when it failed to supervise demobilisation and prevent the breakout of armed conflict following the 1994 Lusaka agreement. During UN supervision, UNITA actually gathered strength for a renewed assault in 1998.

The challenges in Angola are not unique. They illustrate some of the most difficult and important questions Canada and the international community are facing in advancing human security. Issues include:

1. The role of non-state actors (particularly rebel groups, irregular forces, and privately financed militias) in conflict. How can we encourage and enforce compliance of these actors to international law?
2. Understanding "war economies" and the link between economic and political interests in civil wars.
3. Insecurity of displaced people and the most vulnerable groups as well as humanitarian personnel.

The Canadian government is also working to keep Angola on the agenda of other major international fora, including the G-8. (The G-8's emerging work on diamonds holds particular potential). Besides the enormous humanitarian and other work the Canadian and Northern-based NGOs provide, these organisations also have an important role to play in raising awareness about Angola and the links between the primarily Northern consumption of Angolan natural resources (diamonds and oil) and the civil war.

4. Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

Some of the recommendations coming out of the day-long session included:

1. Efforts to end hostilities and implement the Lusaka Protocol should be re-enforced through capacity-building initiatives (by assisting the Angolan people to achieve peace through various enabling measures). Attention should be paid to increasing the participation of women in the political process. Schemes aimed at increasing the knowledge-base (including methodology) as well as the capacity of Angolans to analyse phenomena could prove useful for sustainable peace. Many Angolans are yet to learn their history and understand the roots of the current conflict. Financial commitment to back such initiatives is necessary. Peace-building as well as capacity-building initiatives should be labour-intensive and involve the government as well as civil society (i.e., two-track peace-building/capacity building initiatives).
2. Immediate humanitarian assistance must continue to ensure basic survival.

3. There is a need to maintain the presence and role of international organisations in Angola despite international and UN failures to assist and facilitate peace. The regional office of the UN is key in promoting human rights and may play an important role in future peace negotiations.
4. Canada should aim to create an international climate prohibitive to the continuation of hostilities and the profitability of the arms trade. The sanction regime should continue and be strengthened.
5. The Angolan government should be encouraged by the Canadian government as well as Canadian companies to ensure transparent, accountable and equitable use of natural resources.
6. There is a role for Canadian companies to call for zero tolerance of sanctions violations and in demanding an end to the civil war.
7. A research centre could be created in Canada to closely monitor developments in Angola and identify solutions.

The roundtable is a part of an ongoing process to help find sustainable solutions for peace and alleviate humanitarian crisis in Angola. It signalled that, as during the land mines campaign, the involvement of civil society is becoming a good practice and may be the shape of things to come in international relations. The organisers thanked all participants for their contributions and highlighted the main issues coming out of the roundtable to be the complexity of the crisis, the link between security and development, the necessity to engage in two-track peace-building, the role of civil society in change, the role of diamonds and sanctions in war as well as the importance of state-civil society dialogue.



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ANGOLA ROUNDTABLE

**November 26, 1999
House of Commons,
West Block, Room 371
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List of participants as of November 25

Hon. Maria Minna - Minister for International Cooperation
Heidi Hulan - Policy Advisor Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy
Robert Fowler - Canadian Ambassador to the UN
Terance Jones - DFAIT
Steven Lee - National Director - CCFPD
Pierre Beaudet - Alternatives - Montréal - **Chair**
Susan Brown - Chief Peacebuilding Unit CIDA
Shannon Field - Office of the Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa)

ANGOLA

Pastor Gaspard Domingos - Angolan Council of Churches
Benjamin Castello - Church Action in Angola
Freir Jose Semastiao Manuel - MOSAIKO
Gabriela Cohen - Angolan Women's Network

CANADA

John Saul - York University - Toronto
Vera Issak - Canadian Food Grains Bank
Allan Cain - Development Workshop/Angola - Consul à Luanda
David Toysen - World Vision - Toronto
Lynitta Paisely - Society for International Ministries - Toronto
Nechla Tschirgi - IDRC - Ottawa
Etta Snow - United Church - Toronto
George Burges - Angola Memorial Student Fund - Toronto
Ian Spears - Consultant
Jim Kirkwood - ICCAF - ADN - Toronto
Perez Morangi - Pavoada Canada Angola - Ottawa

Franck Luce - TCLSAC - Canadian Autoworkers
Paul Hannon - Mines Action Canada
Ian Smille - Consultant
Maribel Gonzales - DW
Matthew Scott - World Vision Canada
Michael Rudiak - Red Cross - Ottawa
George Burne - President and CEO - De Beers Canada Corporation
Joan Barkman Azar - Canadian Food Grain Bank
Aparna Swaminathan - CIET Canada
Lloyd Strachan - Consultant
Bernard Taylor - PAC
Marketa Geislerova - Rapporteur -CCFPD

Terry Jones - DFAIT
Particia Fortier - DFAIT
Alan Bones - DFAIT
Hunter McGill - CIDA
Sandra Poohkay - CIDA
Jean Claude Mailhot - CIDA

GUESTS

Stephan Corriveau -Alternatives
Michel Lambert -Alternatives
Madeline Drohan - Globe and Mail
Mike Trickey -Southam News
Marcus Gee -Globe & Mail
Orpheus Morgan - CPAC

REGRETS

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy - Minister of Foreign Affairs
Denis Paradis M.P.
Sandelle Scrimshaw - Director General Africa Bureau DFAIT



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ANGOLA ROUNDTABLE

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- 8:30 a.m. : Registration
- 9:00 a.m. : Welcome Pierre Beaudet (Chair) and Steve Lee
- 9:10 a.m. : Opening Remarks by the Hon. Maria Minna, Minister for International Cooperation
- 9:25 a.m. : Introduction to the Roundtable
- 9:30 a.m. : Current Situation
- Benjamin Castello (Church Action in Angola) :
The Current Socio-Political, Economic, Humanitarian Context
 - Gabriela Cohen (ADRA and Angolan Women's Network) :
Women's Participation in the Economy and Civil Society
 - Discussant: Jim Kirkwood (Inter-Church Coalition on Africa and Angola Development Network)
- 10:00 a.m. : Discussion
- 10:45 a.m. : Break
- 11:00 a.m. : Peacebuilding
- Fr. Jose de Semastiao Manuel (Director of Mosaiko : Catholic human rights organization in Angola) :
Peacebuilding from a Grassroots Perspective: Failures, Successes and Prospects.
 - Robert Fowler (Canadian Ambassador to the UN)
Canadian Role and Strategies in previous and future Peace-Building initiatives

- Discussant: to be confirmed

11:40 a.m. : Discussion

12:30 p.m. : Lunch Break (to room 208 West Block)

01:30 p.m. : Strategic issues: (resume room 371 West Block)

- Gaspard Domingos (General Secretary of the Angolan Council of Churches - CICA):

Churches and Peace Movements in Angola .

- Benjamin Castello (CAA):

Challenges to Humanitarian aid in Angola.

- Allan Cain (Honorary Consul in Luanda and Director Development Workshop)
Role of the International Community and the UN.

- Discussant : David Toysen (Executive Director, World Vision Canada)

02:30 p.m. : Break

02:45 p.m. : Discussion: Strategies for Canada and Canadian Civil Society

04:15 p.m. : Concluding Remarks Steven Lee (CCFPD) and Pierre Beaudet (Alternatives)



SELECTED CCFPD REPORTS FROM 2000-2001¹

Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

Renewing Partnerships for the Prevention of Armed Conflict: Options to Enhance Rapid Deployment and Initiate a UN Standing Emergency Capability. Peter Langille, Global Human Security Ideas and Initiatives. Fall 2000.

Report from the Roundtable on Expert Deployment to International Peace Operations. CCFPD. September 12, 2000.

Canadian Peacebuilding in the Middle East: Case Study of the Canada Fund in Israel/Palestine and Jordan. Tami Amanda Jacoby, University of Manitoba. Fall 2000.

Les Entreprises canadiennes et la consolidation de la paix. Jean-Francois Rioux, Francisco-José Valiente, and Christian Geiser, Université du Québec à Montréal. Le 31 octobre 2000.

Nuclear Weapons and Small Arms

Ballistic Missiles Foreign Experts Roundtable Report. Ernie Regehr, Project Ploughshares and Peter Moore, CCFPD. March 30, 2000.

NATO-Nuclear Weapons Roundtable Report. CCFPD. August 24-25, 2000.

Small Arms and the OAS Roundtable Report. CCFPD. April 28, 2000.

Examen des récentes initiatives gouvernementales et d'ONG concernant les armes légères et appréciation sur leur efficience: proposition pour un indice de sécurité individuelle (ISI). Frances Gaudreault et al. Summer 2000.

Globalization and Firearms: A Public Health Perspective. Wendy Cukier et al. Fall 2000.

Borders

Perspectives on the Borderless World: Issues for Canada. Heather Nicol and Ian Townsend-Gault. Fall 2000.

New Diplomacy

Report from the Roundtable on Just War and Genocide. CCFPD. December 8-9, 2000.

Report from the Ottawa Roundtable for the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). CCFPD. January 15, 2001.

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¹ Visit www.cfp-pec.gc.ca for more reports and other publications.

Children's Rights

Children and Violent Conflict: Meeting the Challenge of Diversity. Erin Baines, Dalhousie University; Barry Burciul, University of Toronto. Summer 2000.

Business and Labour

Canadian Firms, Canadian Values. Canadian Business for Social Responsibility. May 2000.

Africa

Report from the Ottawa Nigeria Roundtable. CCFPD. March 20, 2000.

Asia-Pacific

APEC Media Monitoring Report: A Synopsis of Key Findings from IMPACS' 1999 Youth Internship Project. Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society. 2000.

Report from the Burma and Drugs Roundtable. CCFPD. May 15, 2000.

Report from the North Korea Roundtable. CCFPD. January 22, 2001.

Report from the Victoria Roundtable on Indonesia. CCFPD. March 13, 2000.

Europe

Report on Cyprus: Living Together in the New Century Roundtable. CCFPD. February 14, 2000.

Americas

Canada, Indigenous Peoples and the Hemisphere Roundtable Report. CCFPD. March 23, 2000.

CCFPD Summary Report: The Americas. CCFPD. Fall 2001.

Rapport de synthèse du CCDPE: les Amériques. CCFPD. Fall 2001.

Threats to Democracy in America. Max Cameron, Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL). March 3-4, 2000.

Report from the Roundtable on Governance, Civil Society and the Americas. CCFPD. January 28, 2000.

Report from the Roundtable on Canada-Cuba Relations. CCFPD. January 18, 2000.

Look Ahead to Windsor Roundtable Report (OAS). CCFPD. April 26, 2000.

Culture

Commerce International et diversité culturelle: la recherche d'un difficile équilibre. Ivan Bernier, Université Laval and Dave Atkinson. 2000.

Circumpolar Issues

Roundtable on Northern Foreign Policy: Feedback and Look Ahead. CCFPD. February 5, 2001.

Foreign Policy Research

Gendered Discourses, Gendered Practices: Feminists (Re)Write Canadian Foreign Policy. Claire Turenne Sjolander, University of Ottawa; Heather Smith, University of Northern British Columbia; Deborah Stienstra, University of Winnipeg. May and July 2000.